

# Integrating Pop Music in English Language Teaching to Enhance Listening, Vocabulary, and Cultural Awareness Among Learners

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## Abstract

*This study explores the efficacy of using popular music as a pedagogical tool in English language classrooms. Drawing from linguistic theory and empirical evidence, the study examines how integrating pop songs can enhance students' listening skills, vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and cultural awareness. Through a mixed-methods approach, including surveys, observational studies, and comparative analysis, we evaluate the impact of pop music on language retention and learner engagement. Findings suggest that students who engage with music show improved comprehension and increased motivation in language learning.*

**Keywords:** English Language Teaching, Pop Music, Vocabulary Acquisition, Listening Skills, Pronunciation, Cultural Awareness, Pedagogy.

## 1. Introduction

The use of music in language teaching has long been recognized for its potential to engage students, providing an auditory and emotional element that traditional methods may lack. In recent years, educators have begun incorporating pop music to address various challenges in English language teaching, including engagement, comprehension, and retention. Pop songs, rich in colloquial language and authentic cultural references, serve as effective resources for enhancing vocabulary, understanding idiomatic expressions, and familiarizing students with natural language rhythm and intonation. This paper investigates how using pop music in the classroom can support language development and foster a deeper understanding of cultural context.

## 2. Literature Review

Several studies affirm the positive impact of music on language acquisition. Medina (1993) found that songs improve vocabulary retention, while Schön et al. (2008) highlighted music's role in enhancing pronunciation and phonological awareness. Previous

research suggests that students exposed to music display higher retention rates in vocabulary and grammar due to increased exposure to repetitive and contextually relevant phrases. However, few studies have explored the use of pop music, which offers a unique cultural lens and employs current language trends, making it particularly valuable in modern ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms. This review examines theories supporting music's role in language learning and addresses gaps in existing research regarding the impact of contemporary pop music. [4]

### 2.1. Objectives

- To evaluate the effectiveness of pop songs in improving students' listening comprehension.
- To assess the impact of pop music on vocabulary acquisition and idiomatic understanding.
- To explore how pop songs enhance students' pronunciation and rhythm in spoken English.
- To examine the cultural insights gained by students through exposure to pop music lyrics.

- To determine the overall engagement and motivation levels of students when pop music is integrated into lessons. [1]

### 3. Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative and qualitative research. Data was collected over a three-month period with a sample of 150 ESL students aged 16-24. The study consisted of pre- and post-tests to assess vocabulary, listening comprehension, and pronunciation, supplemented by surveys and focus group discussions to capture student engagement and cultural insights.

- **Quantitative Data:** Tests were administered to measure vocabulary retention, listening comprehension, and pronunciation accuracy before and after lessons incorporating pop music. The results were compared using paired t-tests.
- **Qualitative Data:** Focus groups were conducted with students to discuss their experiences and cultural insights gained from the songs. [2]

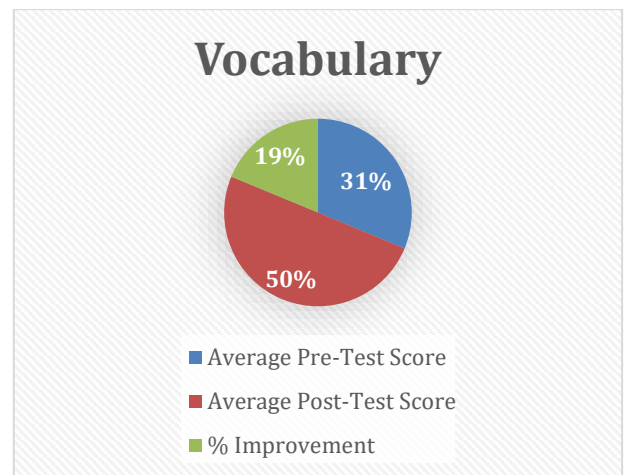
### 4. Discussions

- **Listening Comprehension:** Pop songs were used to train students' auditory skills, encouraging them to recognize sounds, intonation, and rhythm in English. Songs with clear narratives and themes were selected to foster comprehension. [3]
- **Vocabulary Acquisition:** Vocabulary in the lyrics was pre-taught before listening. Students were asked to identify and use the new vocabulary in sentences, and some exercises involved filling in missing words during a second listening.
- **Pronunciation and Fluency:** Students practiced mimicking the singer's pronunciation and rhythm, helping them become more comfortable with natural speech patterns. Pronunciation scores before and after the music sessions were recorded to evaluate improvement.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Through the song lyrics, students were exposed to colloquial expressions, slang, and cultural references, facilitating discussions on cultural norms and values in English-speaking societies.
- **Student Engagement:** Engagement levels were assessed based on participation in classroom

discussions, surveys on student satisfaction, and observations of behavior during music sessions, Shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 Vocabulary Retention Scores**

Table 1: Vocabulary Retention Scores	Average Pre-Test Score	Average Post-Test Score	% Improvement
Vocabulary	45%	72%	27%
Listening Comprehension	50%	78%	28%
Pronunciation Accuracy	52%	80%	28%



**Figure 1 Vocabulary**

### 5. Findings

The study reveals a significant improvement in vocabulary retention, listening comprehension, and pronunciation accuracy among students exposed to pop music. Data also indicates a marked increase in student engagement and satisfaction, as they report greater enjoyment and motivation when learning English through pop songs. Additionally, students gained insight into cultural nuances, idioms, and conversational expressions that would typically be absent in formal language curricula, Shown in Figure 1.

### Conclusion

Integrating pop music into English language teaching proves to be an effective strategy for improving listening, vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural



understanding. The study underscores the importance of blending traditional methods with modern, relatable content to enhance engagement and language acquisition. Future research could explore the use of genre-specific music to cater to diverse linguistic and cultural learning needs.

### References

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